

350 something days later by JoMo3

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Summary:

Taking place days after Eleven closes the Gate, Mike finally gets to see her as the two catch up.

350 something days later

Author's Note:

After watching the second season in a day (it was great, by the way), I felt compelled to write something.

It took Mike three days to finally talk his parents into letting him go and visit El. He hadn't seen her since before she'd left to close the Gate, and they'd talked in front of the Byers home. Hopper had taken her back home to their cabin, while Mike, Lucas, Dustin, Max, and Steve had left the pumpkin patch and eventually gone their separate ways.

He'd called her on the radio when he got home, but didn't get an answer, which had terrified him. The next morning he'd gone to the Byers home to check on Will, and found Hopper there, but no Eleven.

"She's fine," Hopper had said, seeing the look on Mike's face. "She's resting. And before you ask, no, you can't see her. It's not safe yet."

Mike had begged, pleaded, and cried, but Hopper wouldn't budge on his decision.

What Hopper did allow was the two of them to talk over the radio every night, but only for a few minutes; Hopper feared people still may be listening in, while Mike thought El still sounded weak.

But after three days of Mike begging with his parents and Hopper, and El doing some begging of her own with Hopper, he had finally relented and arranged for Mike to visit.

His mother made the drive up to the cabin on Saturday; Mike in the passenger seat, Holly and a casserole in the backseat. After a drive that seemed to take forever, Mike saw Hopper in the distance, standing next to his truck.

"There he is, mom, slow down," Mike said eagerly.

"I see him, Mike, I see him," Karen said, slowing down and parking in front of Hopper's truck.

Mike jumped out of the car, anxiously looking around.

"Mike, get the casserole," his mother said.

"Casserole?" Hopper asked as Mike got it from the backseat. His mom helped Holly out.

"We thought you two may be hungry," Karen said.

Hopper nodded. "Yeah, thanks. This way."

The four walked through the woods, Hopper telling them about the safeguards he had up, and how he and Eleven had been doing over the past few days. When they got to the tripwire, Hopper lifted up Holly over it, while the adults and Mike stepped over.

The group stepped up on the porch, and Hopper led them inside. Mike looked around; it was smaller than he thought, but he could see two people being comfortable here. Looking around, he put the casserole on the table.

"Where is she?" Hopper said, more to himself than anyone else. Walking to a door, he knocked. "El? He's here." Turning back to the Wheelers, he motioned to the couch. "You can sit, if you want."

Leading Holly, Karen took a seat. Mike started to sit at the table just as the door opened, and Eleven stepped out.

All of a sudden it was as if he was seeing her again for the first time in a year. All of the emotions came back to the surface, and it took a lot of effort to hold back the tears that were threatening to come.

"Mike," she said quietly, rushing over and wrapping him in a hug. He hugged her back tightly, as if he would lose her if he let go. When he heard her gentle cries into his shoulder, he gave up on fighting his own tears.

The two stood there, gripping each other, until they heard Hopper clear his throat.

Their faces red, the two teens reluctantly let go of one another, both wiping away tears. "Can we go for a walk?" Eleven asked Hopper.

Hopper sighed, then stole a glance out a window. "Yeah," he relented, "But don't go past the tree line."

Mike looked confused. "Tree line?"

"Come on," Eleven said, taking his hand and leading him outdoors.

The two walked over the tripwire and onto a path, El leading the way as they held hands.

"How're you feeling?" Mike asked once they'd put a little distance between them and the house.

"Better," she answered. "I get headaches, but they're going away."

Mike nodded. "How do you like it out here?"

She shook her head. "Lonely. I want to be back with you guys."

"I do, too."

"But Hopper says it isn't safe yet."

"Did he say when it will be?"

She shook her head. Then, smiling, said, "I saw you."

"What?"

"I left one day. Hopper wasn't here, and I wanted to see you. So I left and went to your school."

"Really?" Mike stopped. "When?"

She shrugged. "I don't know. But I saw you. In the...gym...nay...see...um?"

Mike smiled. "The gym." Then he realized something. "Did you see

me with Max?”

A flash of anger spread over El’s face. “Yes.”

“Were you the one that made her fall?” Eleven didn’t answer, but the color that came to her cheeks was all the answer Mike needed. “El, you could’ve hurt her!”

Letting go of his hand, Eleven folded her arms and looked at the ground. “I didn’t like seeing her with you.”

“El,” Mike said, stepping closer to her, “You don’t have to be jealous.”

“Jealous?”

“Yeah, it’s...seeing Max with me made you mad, right?”

She nodded.

“Why?” he asked, with a hint of a smile.

“Because....” she began, even more color coming to her cheeks. Then, seeing his smile growing, she responded, “You know why.”

“That’s called being jealous. But you don’t need to be.”

“You don’t like her?”

He sighed. “I didn’t, not at first. I didn’t want her in our party.”

“Party?”

“Yeah, our group. But she’s cool. I like her, but not like, you know...like I like you.”

She smiled, and took his hand. They continued to walk.

“What’s the tree line?” Mike asked after a few minutes.

Eleven pointed ahead of them to where the trees appeared to end.
“There.”

“Oh. Should we turn back?”

“Not yet,” she said, giving him a shy smile.

“Okay. Good.”

She led him down a different path. “I found out my real name,” she told him.

“Wow, really? What is it?”

“Jane,” she said with a smile.

“Jane,” he repeated, nodding his head. “How’d you find that out?”

“Hopper has papers that he hid in the cabin....I found them, and saw my name, and my mama’s name.”

“Your mom?”

“Yes,” Eleven said, nodding her head. “Terry Ives.”

“Is she...is she still alive?”

Eleven nodded. “But she’s sick.”

“Oh. I’m sorry, El...I mean, Jane...”

“El,” she said with a smile.

“You still want me to call you El?”

“Yes,” she answered, squeezing his hand. “I like when you call me El.”

“Okay,” he said, grinning. Losing his grin, he said “But I’m sorry about your mom.”

Eleven nodded. “Me too.” Brightening, she added, “And I have a sister.”

“A *sister* ? Wow, El, you’ve been busy.”

They made their way to the end of the path, into a clearing. Leading the way, Eleven took them to two tree stumps, and they sat down.

“What’s your sister like?” Mike asked.

“She’s....not good. She hurts people.”

“Oh. I’m sorry. Does she...do things like you?”

Eleven pointed to her head. “She makes you see things that aren’t there. Gets in your mind.”

“Oh. Where is she?”

“Pittsburgh.”

“You went all the way to Pittsburgh? That’s so cool! What’s it like?”

“Pretty,” she answered. “Dirty. Dark.”

Mike sighed, and took her hand in his again. “You had a busy year.”

Looking at him, she asked, “What did you do?”

So Mike told her about his year, playing Dungeons & Dragons with the boys, while secretly calling out to El every night. He told her about how they had to lie about what happened at the school, and how Will had been acting strange.

She took it all in, and when he finished rested her head on his shoulder. Letting out a sigh, she said, “I missed you.”

“I missed you, too, El. All three hundred and fifty-five days, I missed you.” Sniffing, he added, “But now you’re back. And hopefully Hopper and my mom will let us come over here, more. And, you know...I can come back by myself, sometimes.”

She turned her head to look at him and smiled. “Yes.”

She sat up. The two, still smiling at one another, began to lean in. Their eyes began to close, their noses touched, and...

“El! Where are you?” Hopper’s voice called.

Mike and El pulled away from one another, grinning. “Coming!” she called. With a sigh, the two stood back up and began the trek back towards the cabin.

“When can you come back?” El asked, her hand finding Mike’s again.

He shrugged. “I don’t know. I gotta see what my mom says. But soon. I promise.”

She nodded.

Pretty soon the cabin came into view, and they could see Hopper. He was standing out front, hands on his hips.

“Where the hell did you go?” Hopper asked as they got closer.

“A walk,” Eleven responded.

“To where, Indianapolis?”

Mike’s mom was coming out of the cabin, Holly at her side. “Ready to go, Mike?”

“In a minute, mom,” he told her. Looking at both his mom and Hopper, he said, “I need one more minute with El.” Taking her hand, he led her to the side of the cabin. Although both his mom and Hopper could still see them, they were far enough that they wouldn’t be heard.

“Mike?” El asked.

He let out a breath he didn’t know he’d been holding. “Do you remember the Snow Ball?”

“Yes.”

“Well, um, it’s in a few weeks. And I wanted to know if you still wanted to go. You don’t have to, if you don’t want to, I just...”

“Yes, Mike.”

“What?”

She smiled at him. “Yes, I want to go.”

“Really? Awesome. Um...you wanna talk to Hopper, and see what he says?”

She nodded her head, just as Hopper called, “It’s time.”

The two walked back to the front of the house and, just as when he’d arrived, hugged each other tightly.

“I’ll see you soon, El,” he whispered into her ear.

“See you soon, Mike,” she whispered back.

Reluctantly letting go, they both went their separate ways. El was already thinking of how to ask Hopper to go to the Snow Ball, and Mike just smiling, happy that she was back.

Author's Note:

Thanks for reading. Comments fuel me.